

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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R 171135Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 850

S E C R E T CAIRO 10233

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS

SUBJECT: FURTHER EGYPTIAN COMPLAINTS RE ISRAELI ACTIVITIES IN
SINAI

REF: CAIRO 8474, 9296, 9663

1. UPON PRESIDENT SADAT'S INSTRUCTIONS, SIRRI TELEPHONED YESTERDAY TO DRAW ATTENTION TO ARTICLE IN RECENT ISSUE OF MAARIV INDICATING THAT GOI IS UNDERTAKING INTENSIVE ROADBUILDING IN SINAI. MILITARY ROADS SEVERAL HUNDRED KILOMETERS LONG ARE BEING BUILT AT THE COST OF SEVERAL MILLION ISRAELI POUNDS. ACCORDING TO MAARIV, THE REASON FOR THIS ROADBUILDING IS STRATEGIC. A HIGHWAY IS BEING CONSTRUCTED CONNECTED RAS SIDR ALONG THE GULF OF SUEZ WITH CENTRAL ISRAEL. CONSTRUCTION ALLEGEDLY BEGAN LAST WEEK. WITH COMPLETION OF ISRAELI FORTIFICATIONS IN GOLAN, MAARIV ALLEGEDLY INDICATED GOI IS NOW SENDING ALL OF ITS EQUIPMENT TO SINAI TO CONSTRUCT FORTS AND ROADS.

2. SIRRI SAID THAT PRESIDENT HAD INSTRUCTED THAT THESE LATEST INSTANCES OF ISRAELI ACTIVITY SUGGESTING AN INTENTION TO REMAIN IN SINAI BE BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION. GOE, SIRRI NOTED, MUST TAKE THIS REPORT SERIOUSLY. HE RECALLED THAT WE HAD EARLIER INDICATED TO GOE THAT YOU WOULD TAKE UP THIS GENERAL SUBJECT WITH ALLON DURING DECEMBER 9 MEETING (STATE 267956). GOE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING SOME INDICATION ABOUT YOUR

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PERTINENT TALK AND AN INDICATION OF USG ATTITUDE TOWARD THIS TYPE

OF ISRAELI ACTIVITY.

3. I REMINDED SIRRI THAT OUR POSITION RE SUCH ISRAELI ACTIVITIES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES HAS REPEATEDLY BEEN MADE CLEAR. HE RESPONDED THAT THIS HAS BEEN THE "REALM OF THEORY." GOE IS ASKING WHAT USG INTENDS TO DO ABOUT SUCH ACTION. I TOLD HIM THAT SOME OF THESE MATTERS COULD DOUBTLESS BE RESOLVED AS WE PROCEED WITH STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO MOVE FORWARD ON ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM. I FUZZED ON THE MATTER OF YOUR PROMISED TALK WITH ALLON ON THE SUBJECT, SAYING THERE HAD BEEN NO TIME TO DISCUSS THIS PARTICULAR ITEM WITH YOU IN BRUSSELS.

4. RECOMMENDATION: IF YOU CONCUR, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR ME TO EXPLAIN THAT YOU HAD NO TIME TO DO SO IN YOUR DEC 9 MEETING WITH ALLON, BUT WILL RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH HIM WHEN YOU MEET IN EARLY JANUARY. SOME SUCH REPLY WILL BE BETTER THAN SAYING NOTHING SINCE, AS YOU KNOW, EGYPTIANS ARE A BIT SUSPICIOUS THESE DAYS OF OUR INTENTIONS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAND SETTLEMENT, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS, SINAI, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CAIRO10233
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740366-0963
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741230/aaaaazkv.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 74 CAIRO 8474, 74 9296, 74 9663
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <25 MAR 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FURTHER EGYPTIAN COMPLAINTS RE ISRAELI ACTIVITIES IN SINAI
TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005